

This listing of the claims replaces any and all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1-23 (Canceled).

24. (Currently amended) A water-soluble, hydrophilic adhesive polymer that is free of covalent crosslinks, wherein the polymer is prepared by polymerization of a composition consisting essentially of a hydrophilic monomer and an acrylic acid monomer esterified with a hydrophilic side chain, wherein the hydrophilic monomer is selected from N-vinyl lactams, vinyl alcohols, vinyl amines, maleic acids, esters of maleic acids, maleic acid-co-methylvinyl ethers, esters of maleic acid-co-methylvinyl ethers, sulfoalkylacrylates, sulfoalkylmethacrylates, hydroxystyrene, allyl alcohols, crotonic acid, and itaconic acid.

25. (Canceled).

26. (Currently amended) The polymer of claim 24 ~~[[25]]~~, wherein the hydrophilic monomer is an N-vinyl lactam.

27. (Original) The polymer of claim 24, wherein the acrylic acid monomer is esterified with a poly(alkylene oxide) chain containing about 4-40 alkylene oxide units.

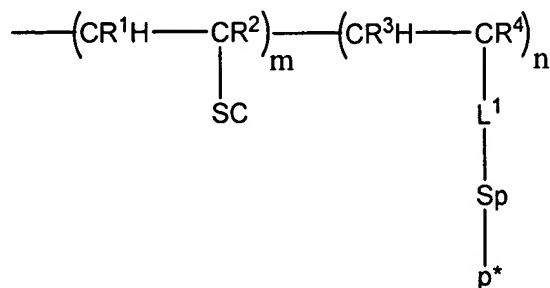
28. (Original) The polymer of claim 27, wherein the acrylic acid monomer is selected from polyethylene glycol monoacrylate and polyethylene glycol monomethacrylate.

29. (Original) A liquid film-forming composition consisting essentially of a water-insoluble film-forming polymer and the polymer of claim 24.

30. (Original) The composition of claim 29, wherein the water-insoluble film-forming polymer is selected from acrylate-based polymers and copolymers, polyvinylacetate, ethylene-vinylacetate copolymers, alkyl cellulose, nitrocellulose, and polysilicones.

31-37 (Canceled).

38. (Currently amended) A water-soluble, hydrophilic adhesive polymer that is free of covalent crosslinks, having the formula:



where:

m is an integer in the range of 1 to 100,000;

n is an integer in the range of 1 to 100,000;

R¹, R², R³, and R⁴ are independently selected from hydrogen, lower alkyl, and lower hydroxyalkyl;

SC is a poly(alkylene oxide) side chain containing about 4-20 alkylene oxide units;

L¹ is selected from ~~-(CO)-O-~~, -O-(CO)-, -O-(CO)-O-, -(CO)-NH-, ~~NH-(CO)-~~,
-O-(CO)-NH-, ~~NH-(CO)-O-~~, -S-S-, -S-(CO)-, and -(CO)-S-;

Sp is a poly(alkylene oxide) linker containing about 4-40 alkylene oxide units; and

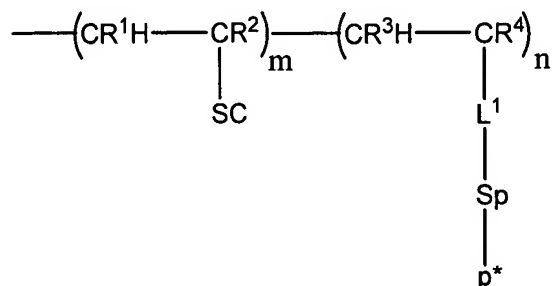
P* is a polar moiety.

39. (Canceled).

40. (Original) The polymer of claim 38, where m is an integer in the range of 1 to 100,000, and the polymer is prepared by polymerization of a composition consisting essentially of a hydrophilic monomer and an acrylic acid monomer esterified with a hydrophilic side chain.

41-90 (Canceled).

91. (Currently amended) A water-soluble, hydrophilic adhesive polymer that is free of covalent crosslinks, having the formula:



where:

m is an integer in the range of 0 to 100,000;

n is an integer in the range of 1 to 100,000;

R¹, R², R³, and R⁴ are independently selected from hydrogen, lower alkyl, and lower hydroxyalkyl;

SC is a hydrophilic side chain;

L¹ is selected from -O-(CO)-, -O-(CO)-O-, -(CO)-NH-, -O-(CO)-NH-, ~~NH-(CO)-O-~~, -S-S-, -S-(CO)-, and -(CO)-S-;

Sp is a poly(alkylene oxide) linker containing about 4-40 alkylene oxide units; and

P* is a polar moiety.

92. (New) The polymer of claim 24, wherein the hydrophilic monomer is selected from N-vinyl-2-pyrrolidone, N-vinyl-2-valerolactam, N-vinyl-2-caprolactam, sulfoethylacrylate, and sulfoethylmethacrylate.